

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicant proposes canceling claims 12-14, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, which places the present application in condition for allowance. Upon entry of the proposed amendments, claims 1, 5, and 9-11 will remain pending in this application.

In the Final Office Action,¹ the Examiner rejected claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,319,700) in view of Seazholtz et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,424,636) and rejected claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mano in view of Yoshida (U.S. Patent No. 5,943,364). The Examiner also allowed claims 1, 5, and 9-11. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication of allowance subject matter.

Although Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mano in view of Seazholtz and the rejection of claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mano in view of Yoshida, in an effort to expedite prosecution in this case, Applicant proposes canceling claims 12-14. Accordingly, the rejections of claims 12-14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are moot.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, placing pending claims 1, 5, and 9-11 in condition for allowance. Furthermore, Applicant submits that the proposed cancellation of claims 12-14 places

¹ The Final Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Final Office Action.

the application in *prima facie* condition for allowance. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant requests the entry of this Amendment and the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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